

Message Text

UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 01 CAIRO 02662 141453Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 DODE-00 DOTE-00
EB-08 FMC-02 INR-07 NSAE-00 SAL-01 CG-00 DLOS-06
OES-06 FEA-01 AID-05 CEQ-01 ERDA-07 EPA-04 IO-13 L-03
NSF-02 NSC-05 PM-04 USIA-15 SS-15 SP-02 INT-05 /135 W
-----141628Z 034453 /44

R 141248Z FEB 77
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1702
INFO AMCONSUL ALEXANDRIA
COMSIXTHFLT
CINCUSNAVEUR LONDON UK

UNCLAS CAIRO 2662

AMCONSUL PORT SAID SENDS

E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: EWWT, SENV, EG
SUBJ: GROUNDED TANKER POLLUTES BITTER LAKES AND CLOSES SUEZ CANAL
TO MOST TANKER TRAFFIC FOR WEEK

1. A SAUDI ARABIAN FLAG TANKER LADEN WITH 30 THOUSAND TONS
OF CRUDE OIL DESTINED FOR ITALY RECENTLY RAN HARD AGROUND IN THE
BITTER LAKES AND, ACCORDING TO SUEZ CANAL AUTHORITY (SCA)
OFFICIALS, BEGAN LEAKING HER CARGO INTO THE SURROUNDING
WATERS.

2. SCA OFFICIALS, FEARING FIRE AND EXPLOSION, CLOSED THE
CANAL TO ALL UNLADEN TANKERS UNABLE TO PRODUCE EVIDENCE
THAT THEIR TANKS HAD BEEN WASHED DOWN AND TREATED WITH A
CHEMICAL DE-GASER.

3. FISHERMEN WHO OPERATE IN BITTER LAKES ARE EXTREMELY
CONCERNED THAT POLLUTION RESULTING FROM SPILLAGE WILL
DESTROY COMMERCIAL FISHING GROUNDS AND THREATEN THEIR
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LIVELIHOOD.

4. SCA HAS OFF-LOADED TANKER INTO SMALL, COASTAL
TANKERS AND INTENDS TO TOW VESSEL TO ISMAILIA FOR
REPAIRS. EXPERIENCED CANADIAN SALVAGE/TUG MASTER GAVE
ME OPINION THAT THIS WAS LEAST ATTRACTIVE SOLUTION, AND
THAT IT WOULD BE WISER TO TOW VESSEL TO SUEZ WHERE

FACILITIES ARE BETTER AND RESIDUAL LEAKAGE CAN BE BETTER
CONTAINED.

5. TANKER TRAFFIC THROUGH CANAL CAME ALMOST TO
STANDSTILL FOR SEVERAL DAYS AS SCA
DENIED BURDENED TANKERS OR TANKERS IN BALLAST
WHOSE TANKS WERE NOT WASHED AND DE-GASED
PERMISSION TO TRANSIT CANAL. SCA HAS MADE EVERY
ATTEMPT TO KEEP THIS INFORMATION CONFIDENTIAL, AND
STEADFASTLY DENIED THAT SUCH AN INCIDENT HAD OCCURED
FOR SEVERAL DAYS. THE DREDGING OPERATIONS IN SOUTHERN
REACHES OF CANAL BEING CARRIED OUT BY THE JAPANESE WERE
ALSO SUSPENDED BECAUSE OF POTENTIAL DANGERS. ALL
OPERATIONS HAVE NOW RETURNED TO NORMAL.

6. SITUATION REFLECTS SCA'S INABILITY O RESPOND TO
MAJOR OIL SPILL DUE TO LACK OF TECHNOLOGY AND
CONCERN FOR PROBLEM. THOUGH IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE
THE VESSELS STANDING OFF PORT SAID REGULARLY
PUMP THEIR BILGES AND POLLUTE BEACH AREAS, SCA
OFFICIALS HAVE PRIVATELY SAID THAT THEY ARE AFRAID THAT
ENFORCING ENVIRONMENTAL CONTROLS WOULD DISCOURAGE USE
OF SUEZ CANAL BY INTERNATIONAL SHIPPERS.
SIGNED SURBER.
EILTS

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: WATER POLLUTION, CARGO SHIPS, CANALS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 14-Feb-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977CAIRO02662
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770052-0179
Format: TEL
From: CAIRO
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t19770245/aaaabnzp.tel
Line Count: 87
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Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 87006ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Previous Classification: n/a
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Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
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Review Date: 27-Oct-2004 12:00:00 am
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Review Exemptions: n/a
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Review Release Date: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
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TAGS: EWWT, SENV, EG
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/87006ec7-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
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